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Organization:

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Comments: To whom it may concern,

I'm writing to express my disagreement with the proposed rules under FSM 7700 and FSM 7710.

The classification of mountain bikes as non-motorized vehicles, and the use of this non-motorized vehicle status to build partnerships and trail networks throughout our forests has been some of the best work in recreational user collaboration in the last 30 years. Classifying e-bikes as motorized vehicles, and the knock-on effects this would perpetuate, would tear down much of the hard work that's already been done to have healthy and sustainable trail building.

This proposal needs more nuance to it to be effective, otherwise the use of e-bikes on previously non-motorized trails will cause conflicts with hikers and horse riders. I would recommend that Class 1 E-bikes be classified as non-motorized transportation, with Class 2/3 E-bikes being classified as motorized transportation. This would allow for use of Class 1 bikes on some non-motorized trails (pending review and comment by local agencies) while prohibiting the use of Class 2/3 bikes on those same trails.

This approach, alongside the "Closed Unless Signed Open" policy that has worked very well in Washington State can help us intelligently approach the feasibility of mountain bikes on local trail networks. This kind of flexibility can only help in the future, once we've let the horse out of the barn it'll be a heck of a time getting it back in, and I think the current proposal has a bunch of unknowns and unintended consequences that would lead to it being a net negative at the end of the day.

Thanks for your time